

SUBJECT: MONMOUTHSHIRE REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN GROWTH AND SPATIAL OPTIONS
MEETING: JOINT ADULTS AND ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE
DATE: 10 DECEMBER 2020
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Joint Adults and Economy and Development Select Committee of the non-statutory consultation on the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) Growth and Spatial Options Paper, and to seek Committee's feedback/comments on the Paper.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To feedback/comment on the RLDP Growth and Spatial Options Paper as appropriate, prior to officers seeking Cabinet's endorsement to consult on 16th December 2020.

3. KEY ISSUES:

Background

- 3.1 The Council is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan for the County (excluding the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park) to cover the period 2018-2033. The RLDP will set out land use development proposals for the County and will identify where and how much new development will take place over the Plan period. It will also identify areas to be protected from development and contain policies against which future planning applications will be assessed.
- 3.2 Cabinet Members will be aware that we reached the Preferred Strategy stage of the RLDP process in March 2020 when Council endorsed the Preferred Strategy for statutory consultation, engagement and stakeholder involvement (5th March 2020).
- 3.3 Progress on the RLDP was subsequently paused in March 2020 because the Covid-19 pandemic meant we could not continue with the Preferred Strategy public engagement events. Following advice from the Minister for Housing and Local Government¹, the decision was subsequently made to cease the Preferred Strategy consultation and second call for candidate sites on 20th July 2020. This enabled the Council to undertake a review of the RLDP issues, vision, objectives and evidence base² in terms of sensitivity to the consequences the current pandemic before progressing with Plan preparation. This review was agreed by Council in October 2020.
- 3.4 Following this, in August 2020 the Welsh Government published a correction to the 2018-based population and household projections. These projections form the starting point for the Plan's evidence base on growth levels and comprise important

¹ Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid-19, 7th July 2020

² Monmouthshire RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in Light of Covid-19 (September 2020)

new evidence that requires consideration. In order to ensure that the evidence base for the RLDP is robust and based on the most up to date information, the decision was made to revisit both the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP process.

- 3.5 These unavoidable delays have necessitated a further revision to the RLDP Delivery Agreement timetable and community involvement scheme. The Revised Delivery Agreement, together with the RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base were reported to, and endorsed by, Council on 22nd October 2020. The Welsh Government approved the Delivery Agreement on 30th October 2020 meaning that work on the RLDP will progress in accordance with the revised timetable, the next key stage being the Growth and Spatial Options.

Purpose of the Growth and Spatial Options Paper

- 3.6 The Growth and Spatial Options Paper sets out a number of alternative growth and spatial strategy options for consideration having regard to the Plan's evidence base and policy aspirations. The options presented provide an indication of the scale of growth (housing and employment) that the RLDP will need to address, together with spatial strategy options for accommodating that growth. The consideration of realistic growth and spatial options is an important part of the preparation of the RLDP which are intended to facilitate discussion and inform the Preferred Strategy.
- 3.7 The Growth and Spatial Options Paper is attached at **Appendix 1**. It identifies our preferred growth and spatial options that are considered to best address the County's key issues/challenges and meet the RLDP objectives. The Paper should be read alongside the RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (January 2019, as amended June 2019), RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives in Light of Covid-19 (September 2020) and the Reports prepared by Edge Analytics (November 2020)³.
- 3.8 The Paper is structured as follows:

Section 1 Introduction – outlines the purpose, background, evidence base and consultation arrangements of the Growth and Spatial Options Paper.

Section 2 Growth Scenarios and Options - presents a range of alternative demographic, housing and employment growth options for consideration to inform the RLDP (2018-2033). The population, household, dwelling and employment implications associated with each of the alternative growth options are presented, together with their wider implications for the County and the extent to which they align with the RLDP and Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) objectives.

Section 3 Spatial Strategy Options - presents a range of spatial strategy options for accommodating the required level of housing and employment growth in the County. The implications associated with each of the alternative spatial strategy options and the extent to which they align with the RLDP and ISA objectives are set out.

Section 4 Next Steps - sets out the next key stage in the RLDP process.

Appendix 1 – Monmouthshire RLDP Demographic Evidence Edge Analytics (November 2020)

Appendix 2 - Monmouthshire RLDP Affordable Housing Evidence Addendum Report Edge Analytics (November 2020)

³ Monmouthshire RLDP Demographic Evidence, Edge Analytics (November 2020) and Monmouthshire RLDP Affordable Housing Evidence Addendum Report, Edge Analytics (November 2020)

Appendix 3 – RLDP Objectives

Appendix 4 – ISA Objectives

Appendix 5 – Long List of Growth Scenarios

Appendix 6 – Long List of Spatial Options

Appendix 7 – Summary Matrix of Growth Options against the RLDP Objectives

Appendix 8 – Summary Matrix of Growth Options against the ISA Objectives

Appendix 9 – Summary Matrix of the Spatial Options against the RLDP Objectives

Appendix 10 – Summary Matrix of the Spatial Options against the ISA Objectives

An Executive Summary and Easy Read version of the paper have been prepared and are attached at **Appendix 2** and **Appendix 3** respectively.

Growth Options

- 3.9 Cabinet originally endorsed a range of growth and spatial options for non-statutory consultation on 3rd July 2019. Consultation and engagement took place in July/August 2019, the responses to which helped to inform the Preferred Strategy (March 2020). The growth options were based on the latest projections data available at the time, this being the Welsh Government 2014-based population and household projections. However, in August 2020 the Welsh Government published a correction to the 2018-based population and household projections which was the first update since the 2014 projections. In preparing Local Development Plans, national policy requires local authorities to take account of updates to nationally published data, such as household and population projections⁴. The latest Welsh Government (WG) population and household projections form the starting point for the Plan's evidence base on growth levels, onto which policy choices can be added to ensure that the issues are addressed, objectives met and vision achieved. As such, the updated projections comprise important new evidence that requires full consideration. In order to ensure that the evidence base for the RLDP is robust and based on the most up to date information, we need to revisit both the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP process.
- 3.10 In view of this, Edge Analytics was commissioned to prepare a range of up-dated demographic, dwelling and employment growth scenarios using the 2018-based projections as the starting point, to inform the RLDP growth options. In accordance with the requirements of the Development Plans Manual (March 2020), the Paper⁵ considers the 2018-based Welsh Government projections, as well as the latest available statistics and evidence, including the Monmouthshire Economies of the Future Report (2018) and the 2020 Monmouthshire Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA), to provide a range of growth scenarios for the County. The paper sets out a demographic profile of the County, illustrating the geographical context, components of population change (i.e. births, deaths and migration), housing completions and the changing age profile of the population. It then considers how much housing and employment growth would be needed over the RLDP period for each of the scenarios set out.
- 3.11 A total of 14 scenarios have been generated, together with further sensitivity testing for all of the demographic and dwelling-led scenarios with regard to household formation

⁴ Development Plans Manual, March 2020 (paragraph 3.83).

⁵ Monmouthshire RLDP Demographic Evidence, Edge Analytics (November 2020)

and commuting ratios. This sensitivity testing seeks to address the County's unbalanced demographic, one of the key RLDP objectives, and one which has increased emphasis and importance in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.12 The sensitivity adjustments are:

- To increase household formation rates – the 2018 population projections show a high level of households comprising 4+ adults, indicating young adults are living with their parents or in shared accommodation, unable to afford their own home. By increasing household formation rates, more homes will be built increasing opportunities for these young adults to access housing within the County rather than move elsewhere. This objective will be supported by affordable housing and private sector housing mix policies. This approach will help with the intention to increase the volume of homes for younger adults - in order to provide homes to retain younger adult age groups and rebalance Monmouthshire's ageing demographic (RLDP Objectives 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13).
- Apply a reduction in the commuting ratio – the 2011 census indicated that 40% working age population commutes out of the County for work. This adjustment reflects the Council's economic ambition to attract new employment to the County, meaning fewer people will need to travel out for work. This objective will be supported by policies relating to broadband infrastructure connectivity for new homes and policy support for employment hubs, enabling home-working. This approach will support the Council's Climate Emergency declaration (RLDP Objectives 1, 14, 15 and 17).
- Adjust migration rates to reflect local influences i.e. the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls. This adjustment reflects known trends. Monmouthshire's population is ageing and declining so in-migration continues to be essential to rebalance Monmouthshire's ageing demographic and ensure communities are socially and economically sustainable. Affordable housing policies will prioritise people with a Monmouthshire connection (RLDP Objectives 9, 12 and 13).
- A specific policy-led affordable housing element is added to all the selected growth options. These additional dwellings will be delivered on sites comprising at least 50% affordable housing and will meet 10% of the total affordable housing need within the County (identified by Monmouthshire's Local Housing Market Assessment 2020). This approach will help to explicitly address the Council's key/most prevalent issue of lack of affordable housing (RLDP Objectives 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13). There will be a requirement that this element of the option will be delivered on sites which have at least 50% affordable housing.

3.13 The aim is to create a more balanced population structure to ensure that the County has a sufficient population base of working aged people to support the economy and to ensure our communities are sustainable and resilient, and to provide a level of growth that can provide opportunities for younger people to both stay and move to the area. The sensitivity testing achieves this by modelling adjustments to the household membership rates for three key younger age groups (19-24, 25-29, 30-34), whilst at the same time reducing out-commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce.

3.14 From these 14 scenarios, six alternative growth options have been selected for non-statutory consultation to assist in determining the housing and employment requirements of the RLDP. The options selected are considered to represent a robust range of growth scenarios and include four demographic, one dwelling-led and one employment-led option as summarised in Table 1. Further details of the assumptions/sensitivity testing applied to the selected growth options are set out Table 4 of the Growth and Spatial Options Paper.

- 3.15 In addition to the initial modelling, all six selected options have been the subject of additional testing to establish the impact on demography, dwellings, household formation and employment of an affordable-housing policy-led strategy. This is set out in detail in the Edge Analytics Affordable Housing Evidence Addendum Report⁶.
- 3.16 The affordable housing policy-led element of the testing aims to address the key issues associated with housing affordability in the County. Firstly it aims to address the issue of affordability for those people who are either not able to form households or are forced to leave the County due to high average house purchase and private rent prices in the County, i.e. the intermediate affordable housing need. Secondly, it seeks to address the need for social rented homes in the County. The current pandemic has increased the need for such homes and revealed the extent of hidden homelessness in the County. The Minister for Housing and Local Government has announced that post-Covid-19, no-one should return to the streets. The affordable housing policy-led growth will assist in addressing these fundamental issues/challenges by providing opportunities to retain/house those in need of social and intermediate homes. It will also help to redress the County's demographic imbalance and improve the resilience and sustainability of our communities and the strength of our economic base.
- 3.17 The LHMA identifies the level of housing need in the County and is a core piece of baseline evidence to inform the RLDP. To establish the number of additional dwellings associated with the affordable housing policy-led growth for each selected option, and therefore the overall dwelling growth required over the Plan period, the population and household formation arising from the initial modelling has been entered into the LHMA model. This has established the level of affordable housing need which will arise over the Plan period from each of the six selected growth options.
- 3.18 As a starting point, it is proposed to meet 10% of the need identified in the LHMA on affordable housing-led sites where at least 50% of the homes are affordable. The 10% target may be refined in light of the evidence as we progress through the Plan process. The delivery of both market and affordable homes on these sites is in addition to homes delivered on sites allocated to meet the level of growth evidenced by the initial modelling.
- 3.19 The Growth and Spatial Options Paper sets out the population, household, dwelling and employment implications associated with each of the selected growth options, together with their wider implications for the County and the extent to which they will achieve the RLDP objectives. The options have also been assessed through the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal process. A summary of the implications associated with the selected growth options is set out in Table 1.
- 3.20 Based on the assessment of the growth options set out in the Paper, Growth Option 5 - Population-led projection (with added policy assumptions) - is our preferred option. It is considered that this option provides a level of growth that would best address the County's key issues/challenges and meet the RLDP objectives, including the provision of market and affordable homes, sustainable economic growth and enabling/supporting balanced and socially sustainable communities, particularly in terms of demography; the importance of which has been heightened by the current pandemic. Overall, this option is considered to be the most conducive to achieving the RLDP vision and the Council's core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities across Monmouthshire.

⁶ Monmouthshire RLDP Affordable Housing Evidence Addendum Report, Edge Analytics (November 2020)

Table 1: Summary of the Implications of Selected Growth Options

Growth Option	Type of Scenario	Population Change 2018-2033	Population Change %	Average Net Migration per annum	Household Change 2018-2033	Household Change %	Dwellings per annum	Dwellings 2018-2033	Jobs per annum	Jobs 2018-2033
1. Balanced Migration (with added policy assumptions) (Net Nil Migration (MR, CR_R), AH)	Demographic	-5110	-5.4%	108	-240	-0.6%	-17	-255	-120	-1,800
2. WG 2018-based Principal Projection (AH)	Demographic	6,047	6.4%	818	3,749	9.3%	262	3,930	208	3,120
3. WG 2018-based Principal Projection (with added policy assumptions) (WG 2018-based Principal (MR, CR_R), AH)	Demographic	6,147	6.5%	825	4,551	11.3%	318	4,770	265	3,975
4. Dwelling-led Average (based on dwelling completion rates) Dwelling-led 5 year average, AH	Dwelling	10,641	11.3%	1,110	5,628	14.0%	402	6,030	364	5,460
5. Population-led projection(with added policy assumptions) (PG Long Term (adjusted) (5yr) (MR, CR_R), AH)	Demographic	12,443	13.2%	1,223	7,255	18.1%	507	7,605	481	7,215
6. Employment-led projection (with added policy assumptions) (Radical Structural Change Higher (CR_R), AH)	Employment	17,403	18.5%	1,524	8,653	21.6%	604	9,060	642	9,630

Spatial Strategy Options

- 3.21 In addition to setting out options for the level of growth needed over the Plan period, consideration must also be given to spatial strategy options for broadly where this development should take place within the County. The Paper presents a range of spatial strategy options for accommodating the required level of housing and employment growth in the County.
- 3.22 As we are revisiting the Growth and Spatial Options stage of the RLDP process, the RLDP spatial options previously considered have been reassessed to identify suitable options for consideration. Consequently, two of the options considered in the 2019 consultation Paper, which included a new settlement, have been discounted as Welsh Government officials advised these would be contrary to national policy set out in PPW10 which suggests that new settlements should only be proposed as part of a joint LDP, Strategic Development Plan or Future Wales: the National Plan 2040. An additional option, which focuses growth in the North of the County, has been included as an option as a result of consultation responses to the 2019 consultation. Accordingly, a total of 4 broad Spatial Distribution Options have been taken forward as realistic options. These are:
- **Option 1: Continuation of the Existing LDP Strategy**
Distribute development around the County with a particular focus on Main Towns, some development in Severnside and some development in the most sustainable rural areas to enable provision of affordable housing throughout the County. New residential development to be accompanied by new employment opportunities, where possible.
 - **Option 2: Distribute Growth Proportionately across the County's most Sustainable Settlements** – Growth, including jobs and affordable housing, would be distributed across the County's most sustainable settlements, with the level of growth proportionate to that settlement's size and amenities, affordable housing need as identified in the LHMA, the capacity for growth and/or the need for development to sustain the community.
 - **Option 3: Focus Growth on the M4 Corridor** – Growth would be predominantly located in the South of the County in the Severnside area close to the M4/M48, to capitalise on its strategic links to the Cardiff Capital Region and South West England, existing economic opportunities and regional infrastructure connections, including via the South Wales Main rail line at Severn Tunnel Junction. Affordable Housing would be directed to those sustainable areas in the south of the County identified in the LHMA as having the greatest housing.
 - **Option 4: Focus Growth in the North of the County** – Growth would be predominantly located in the most sustainable settlements within the North of the County to capitalise on its strategic links to the Heads of the Valleys and wider Cardiff Capital Region via the A465, and towards Herefordshire via the A449 and A40, along with rail links to Newport, Cardiff and the North via the Welsh Marches line. Affordable Housing would be directed to those sustainable areas in the north of the County identified in the LHMA as having the greatest housing need.
- 3.23 As with the growth options, the Paper considers the implications associated with each of the alternative spatial strategy options, and the extent to which they will achieve the RLDP objectives. The options have also been assessed through the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal process.

3.24 The Spatial Options presented provide alternative spatial strategy options for accommodating growth, having regard to the Plan's evidence base and policy aspirations. Based on the assessment set out in the Paper, Spatial Option 2 - to Distribute Growth Proportionately across the County's most Sustainable Settlements - is the preferred Spatial Option. It is considered that this option would best address the County's issues and challenges and meet the RLDP objectives, including the provision of market and affordable homes throughout the County's most sustainable settlements, sustainable economic growth and enabling/supporting balanced and socially sustainable communities; the importance of which has been heightened by the current pandemic. Overall, this spatial option is considered to be the most conducive to achieving the RLDP vision and the Council's core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities across Monmouthshire.

Consultation and Engagement

3.25 There is no statutory requirement to consult on the RLDP growth and spatial strategy options. However, as with the original growth and spatial options, it is considered appropriate to continue to engage with stakeholders/our communities at this key stage of the process to help build consensus on the growth levels and spatial strategy of the RLDP and to fully understand the implications of the options. Engagement/consultation at this stage of the process will also ensure that the Council accords with the two of the five ways of working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act (i.e. involvement and collaboration).

3.26 It is proposed that a non-statutory consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options will take place for a 4-week period from 4th January to 1st February 2021, whereby comments will be invited on the consultation questions set out in the Paper. Engagement/consultation will also take place via:

- Planning Policy officer attendance at Area Committee meetings (if held) and at a joint Area Cluster meeting on 21st January 2021;
- A Members' Workshop on 8th December 2020 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
- RLDP Growth and Spatial Options virtual event(s) during the consultation period which will be open for all to attend (details tbc);
- Scrutiny by Economy & Development and Adult Select Joint Committee on 10th December 2020;
- Internal discussions within the Council through DMT/SLT;
- Notify all parties on the LDP database of the non-statutory consultation.

Next steps

3.27 Feedback from this consultation/engagement process will be considered and will help inform the preferred growth and spatial strategy options which will be set out in the Preferred Strategy. The Preferred Strategy will be the subject of further engagement/consultation and political reporting as the RLDP is progressed. It is anticipated that statutory consultation on the Preferred Strategy will take place in Spring/Summer 2021.

4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

4.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) sets out the requirement for all LDPs to be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). All stages of the RLDP will be subject to an Integrated Sustainability Assessment (including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations (WCFG), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), and Welsh Language Impact

Assessment (WLIA)), whose findings will be used to inform the development of the Replacement LDP strategy, policies and site allocations in order to ensure that the Plan will be promoting sustainable development.

- 4.2 A Future Generations Evaluation (including equalities and sustainability impact assessment) is attached to this report at **Appendix 4**.

Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting

- 4.3 There are no safeguarding or corporate parenting implications arising directly from this report

5 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
1. Joint Adults and Economy and Development Select Committee consider and comment, as appropriate, on the RLDP Growth and Spatial Options Paper.	This report provides the Joint Adults and Economy and Development Select Committee with the opportunity to view the Growth and Spatial Options Paper and comment accordingly. Any feedback received will be carefully considered and will help inform the preferred growth and spatial strategy options which will be set out in the Preferred Strategy.		This is our preferred option. The Paper sets out a number of alternative growth and spatial options for consideration informed by a robust evidence and policy aspirations. It identifies our preferred growth and spatial options to address the County's key issues/ challenges and to meet the RLDP and ISA objectives. The Paper will facilitate discussion and inform the next key stage of the process, the Preferred Strategy.
2. Joint Adults and Economy and Development Select Committee do not consider or comment on the RLDP Growth and Spatial Options Paper.		Joint Adults and Economy and Development Select Committee would miss an opportunity to comment on the growth and spatial options presented in the Paper which will help to shape the Preferred Strategy.	The option of not commenting on the Paper would result in the Joint Adults and Economy and Development Select Committee missing a key opportunity to help shape the Preferred Strategy and should, therefore, be discounted.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Officer and consultant time and costs associated with the preparation of the Growth and Spatial Options Paper and carrying out the required consultation exercises. Any

costs will be met from the Planning Policy budget or LDP reserve and carried out by existing staff.

7. **CONSULTEES**

- Enterprise DMT
- SLT
- Cabinet
- Member workshop 8th December 2020
- Joint Adults and Economy & Development Select Committee 10th December 2020

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Monmouthshire RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (January 2019, as amended June 2019)
- Monmouthshire RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in Light of Covid-19 (September 2020)
- Monmouthshire RLDP Demographic Evidence, Edge Analytics (November 2020)
- Monmouthshire RLDP Affordable Housing Evidence Addendum Report, Edge Analytics (November 2020)
- Monmouthshire RLDP Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020)
- Monmouthshire RLDP Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) of Strategic Options Report, Aecom (December 2020)

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APPENDICES:

APPENDIX 1: Monmouthshire RLDP Growth and Spatial Options Paper, December 2020

APPENDIX 2: Monmouthshire RLDP Growth and Spatial Options: Executive Summary, December 2020

APPENDIX 3: Monmouthshire RLDP Growth and Spatial Options: Easy Read Version, December 2020

APPENDIX 4: Future Generations Evaluation